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(54) **RIGHTS APPLICATION WITHIN DOCUMENT-BASED CONFERENCING**

(75) Inventors: **Jason T. Pittenger**, Menlo Park, CA (US); **Nigel Pegg**, San Francisco, CA (US)

(73) Assignee: **Adobe Systems Incorporated**, San Jose, CA (US)

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(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC ..... **G06F 21/6209** (2013.01); **G06F 21/606** (2013.01); **G06Q 10/101** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

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See application file for complete search history.

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*Primary Examiner* — Andrey Belousov

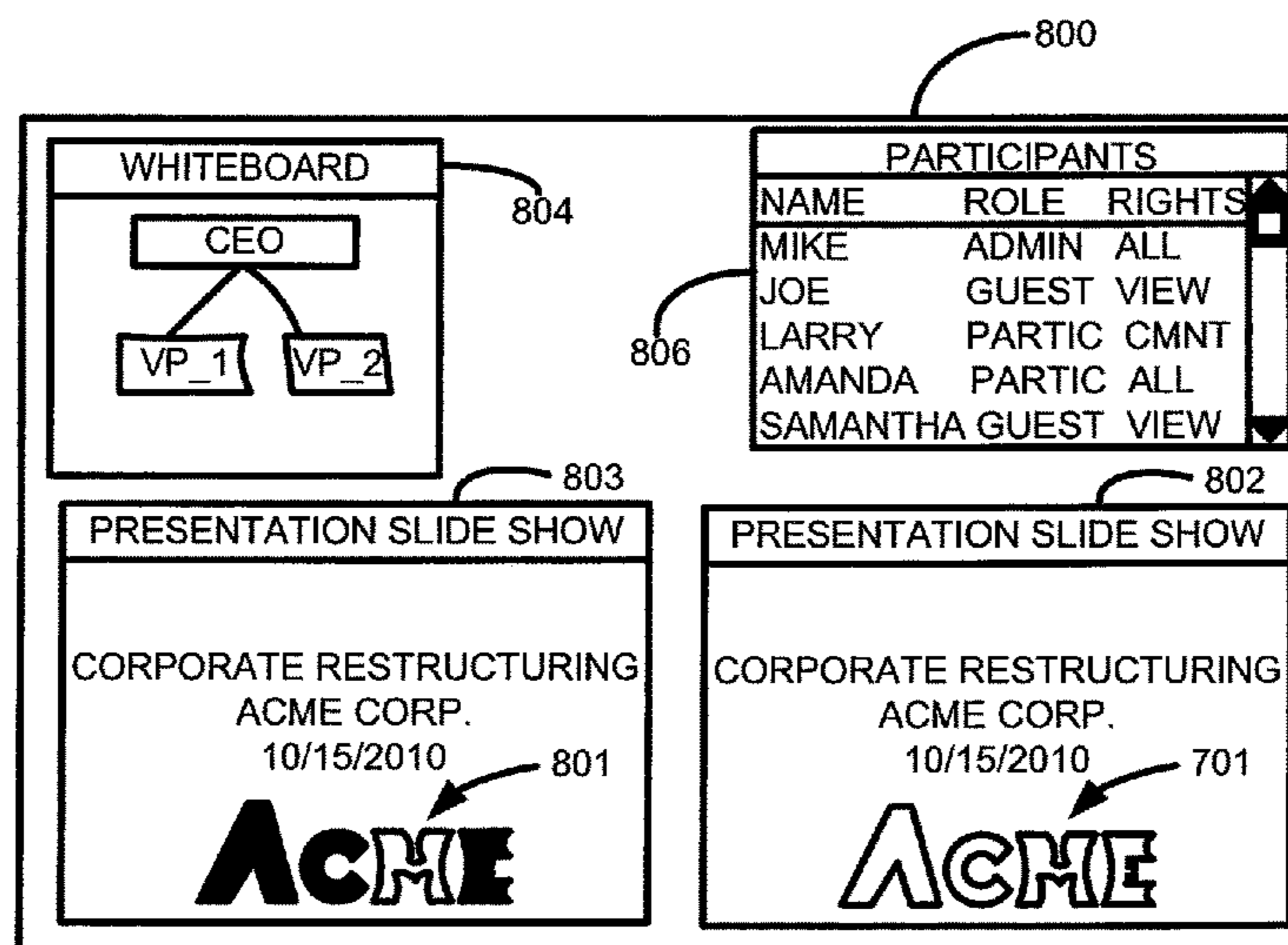
*Assistant Examiner* — Haimei Jiang

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — Shook, Hardy & Bacon L.L.P.

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Although current conferencing applications provide many abilities, some of these abilities are limited. Various embodiments described herein provide one or more of systems, methods, software, and data structures that allow a document, or other file type, to be used to connect to a network-based conference, such as over the Internet, where a view of a local copy of the document is synchronized between participants. Participation abilities of certain network-based conference participants may be limited in such embodiments. Such limits may be enforced locally for each participant, on a server by preventing data representative of certain actions from being broadcast to other participants, or in other ways as described and would be readily apparent herein.

**17 Claims, 10 Drawing Sheets**



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**FIG. 1**

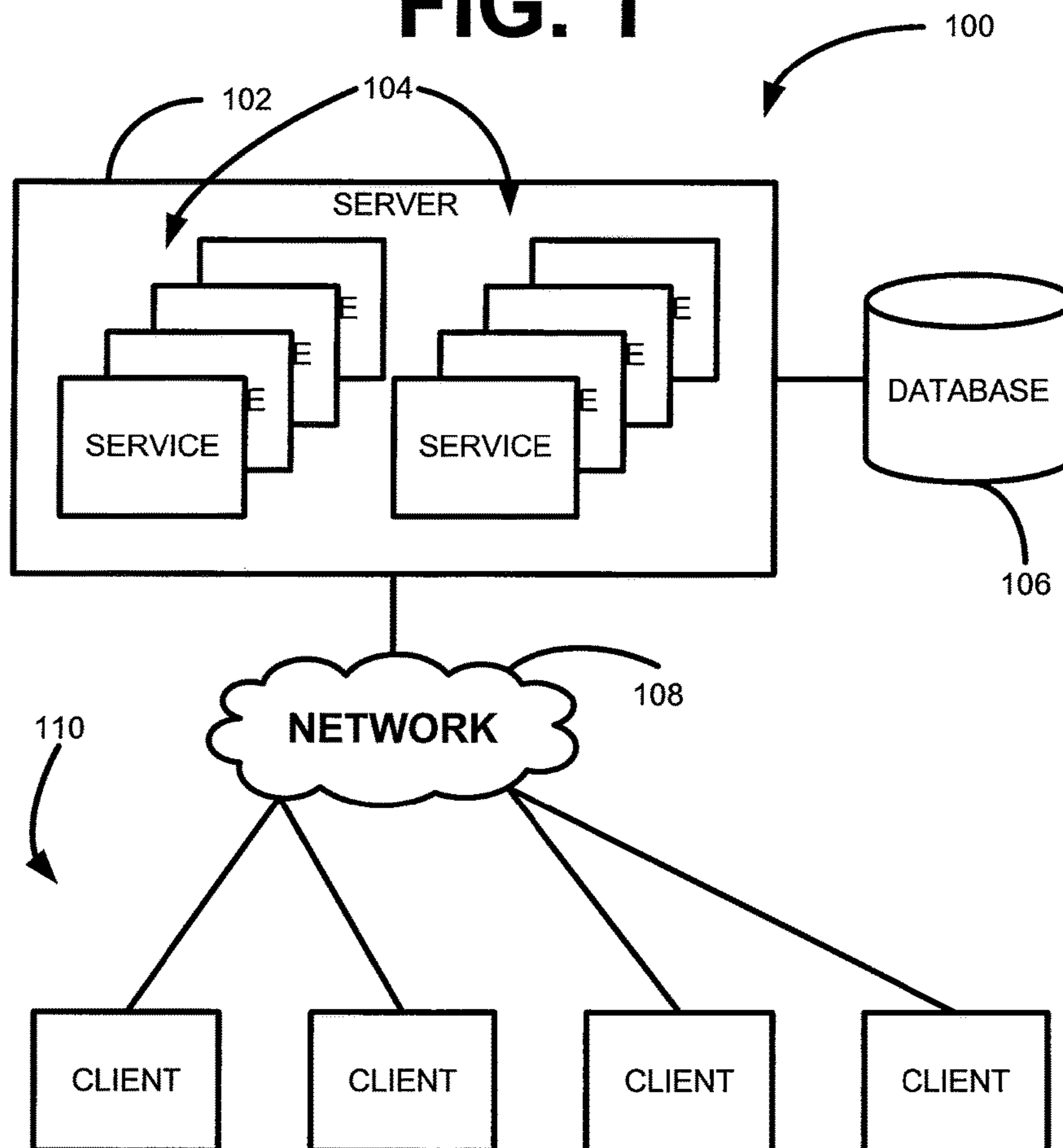


FIG. 2

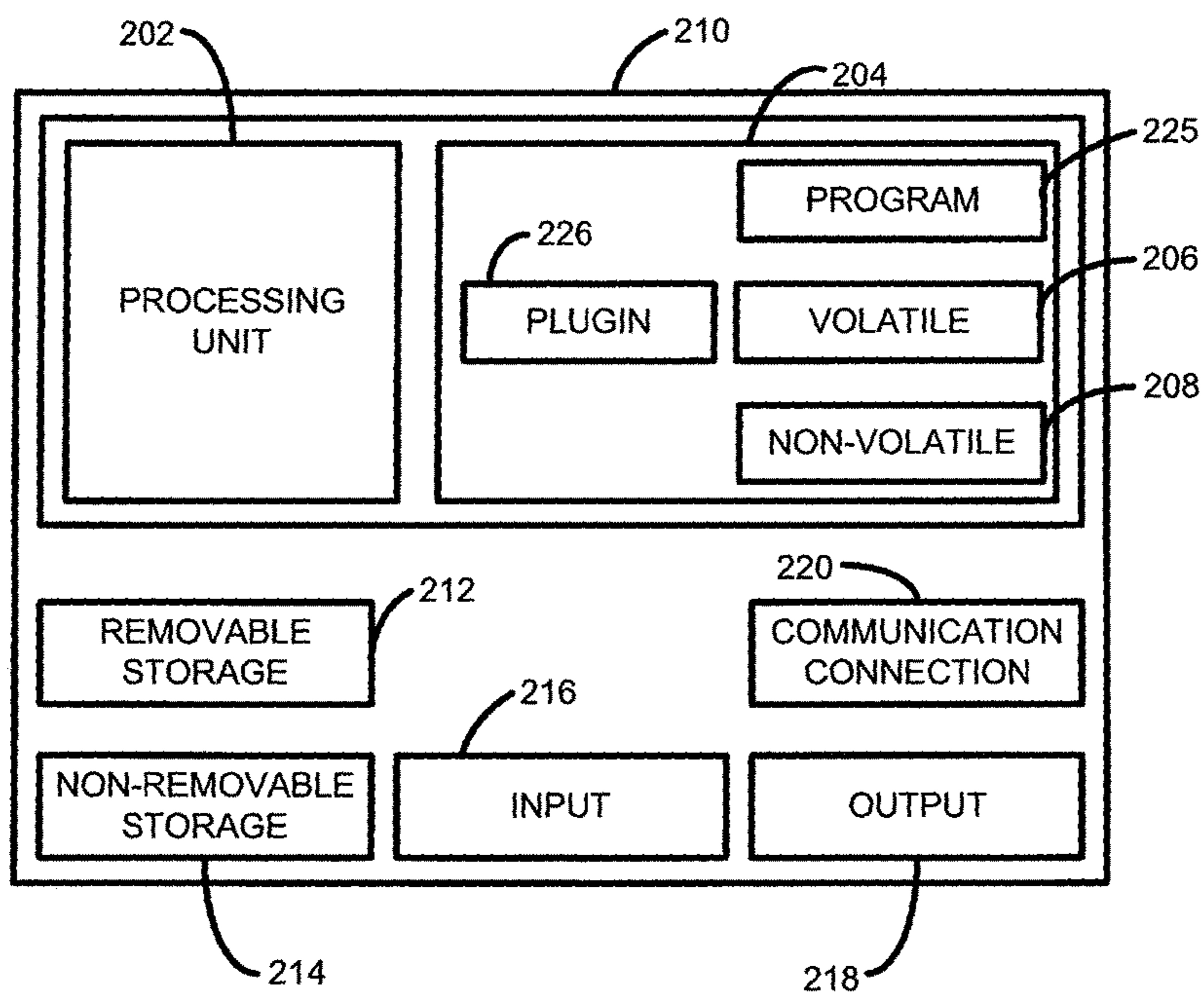


FIG. 3

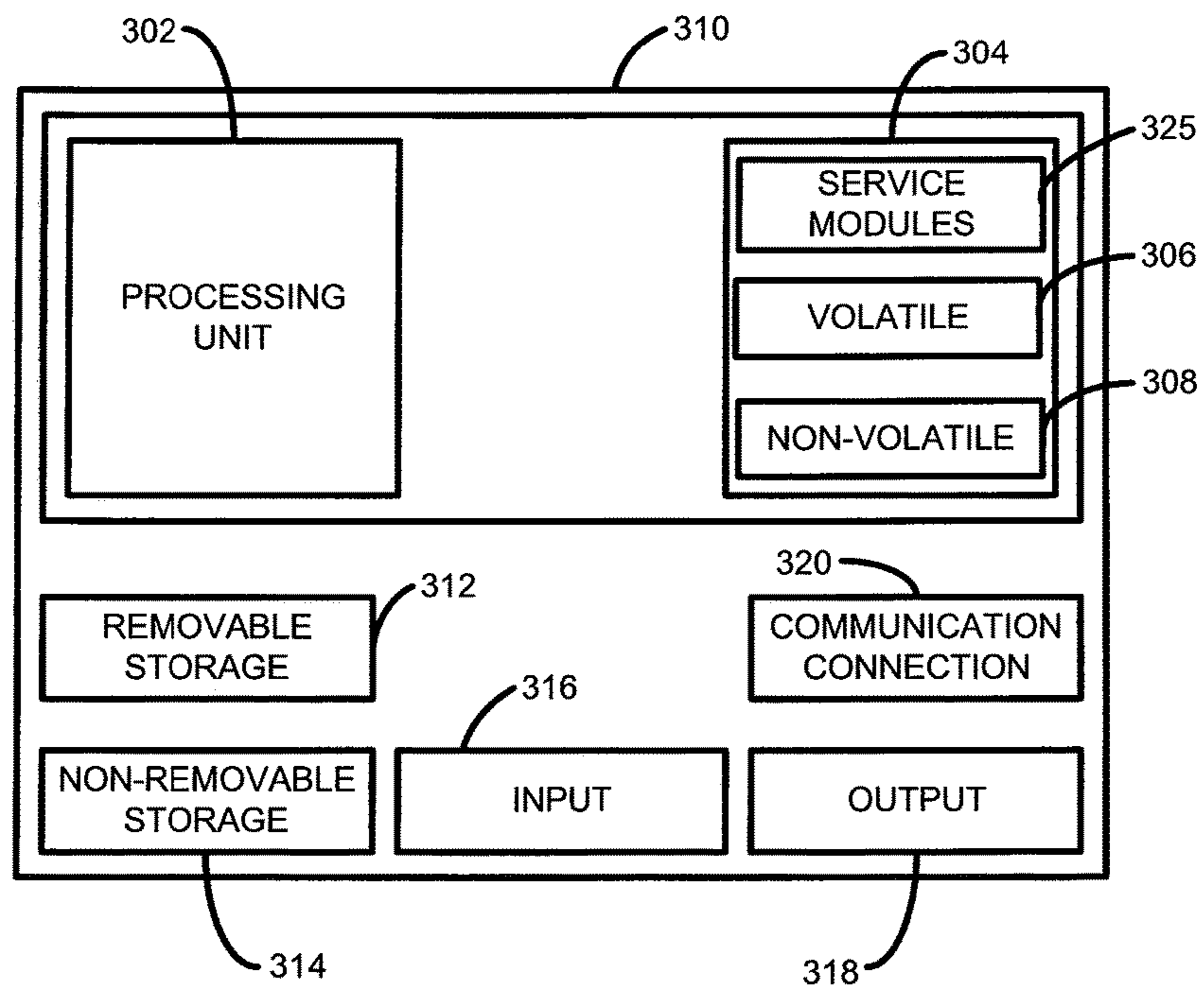
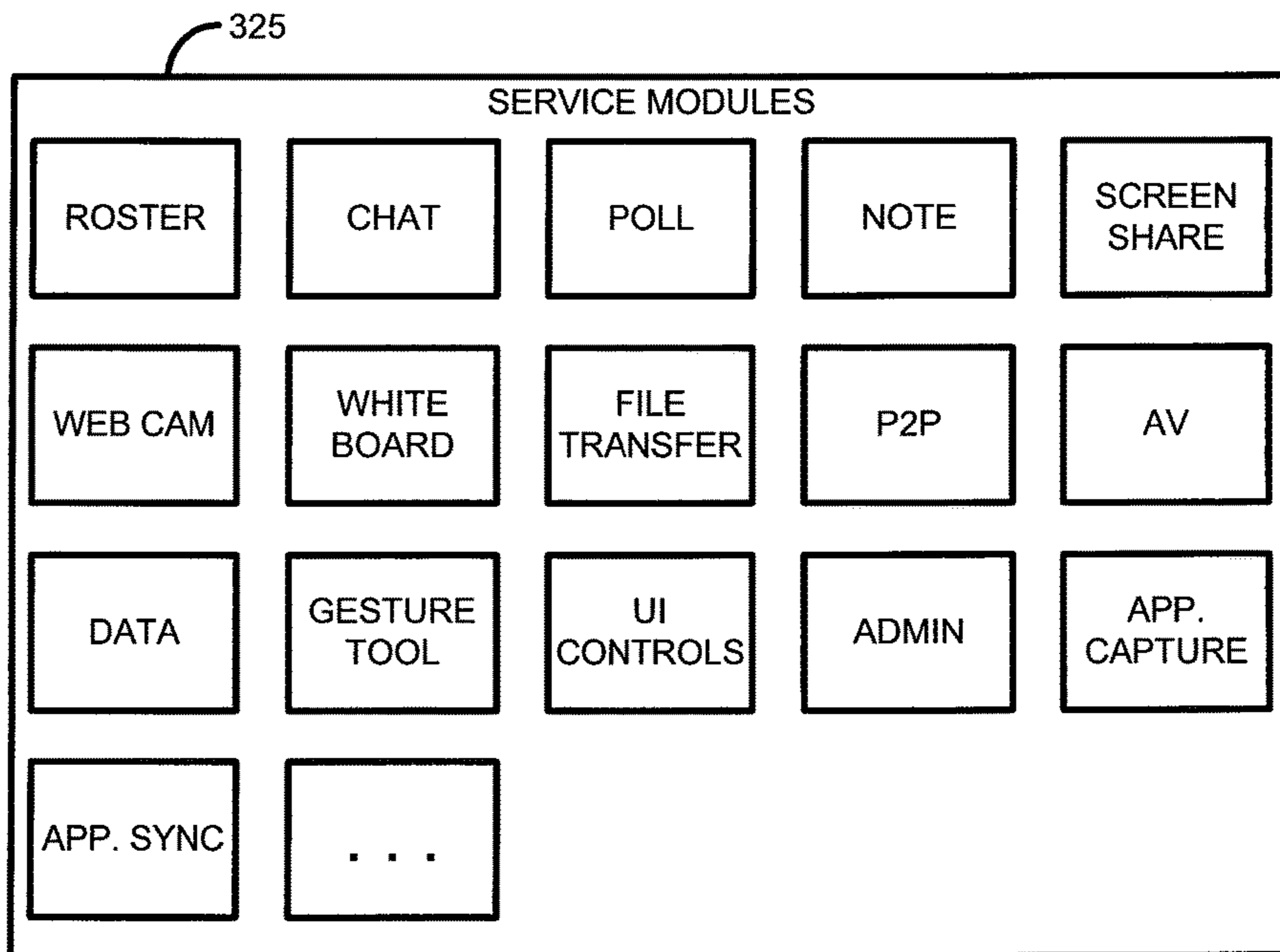
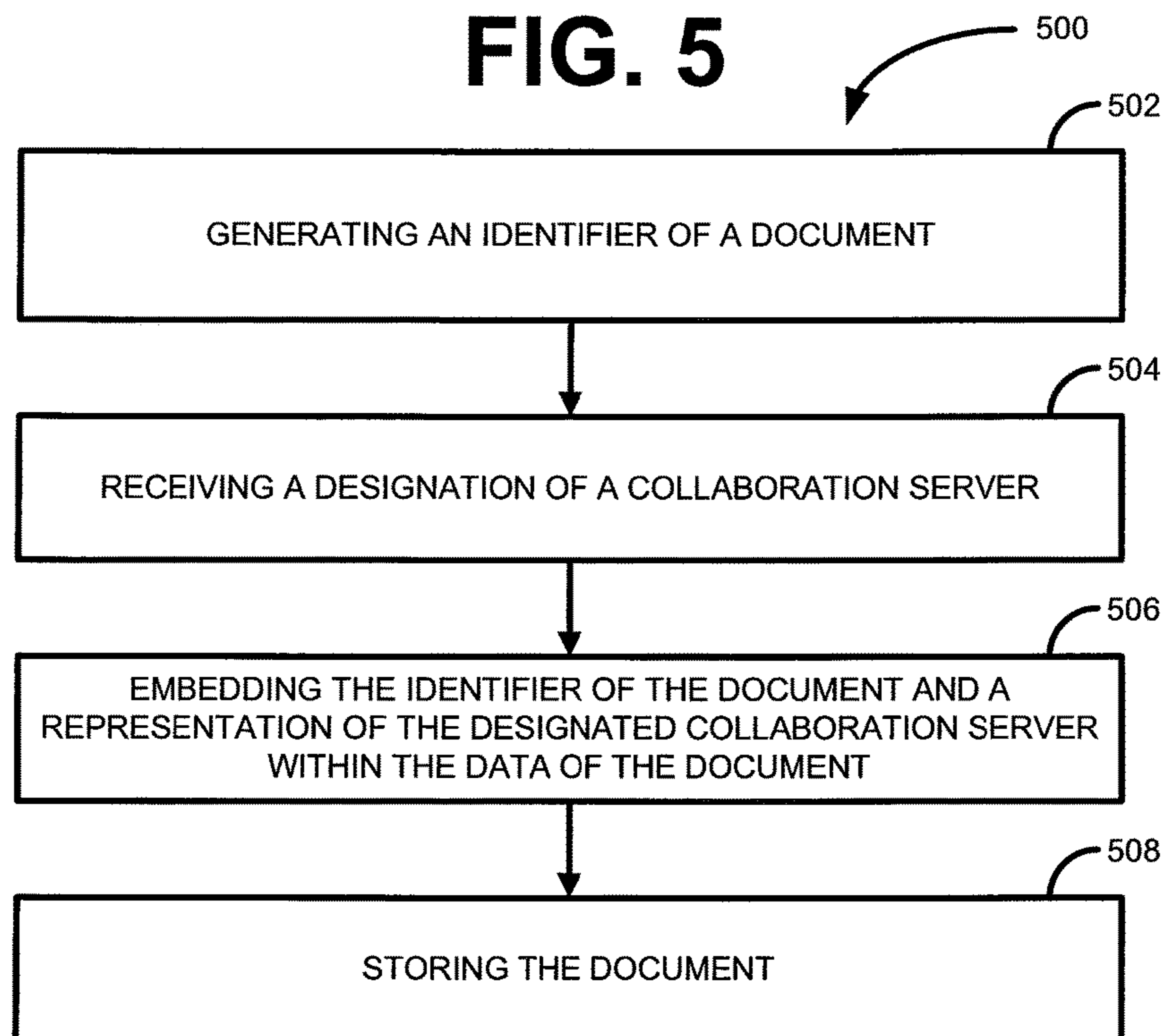


FIG. 4



**FIG. 5**



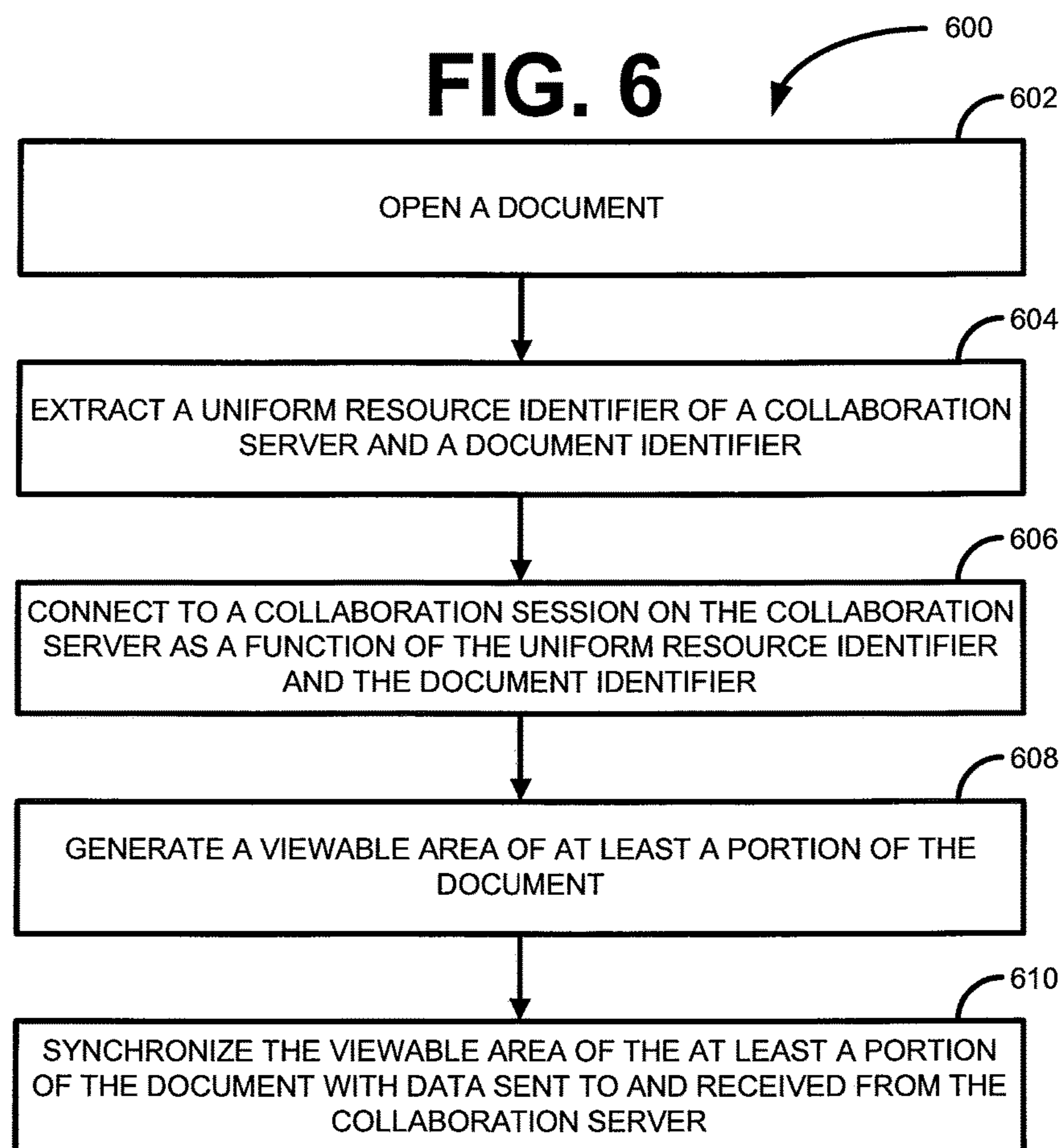
**FIG. 6**



FIG. 7

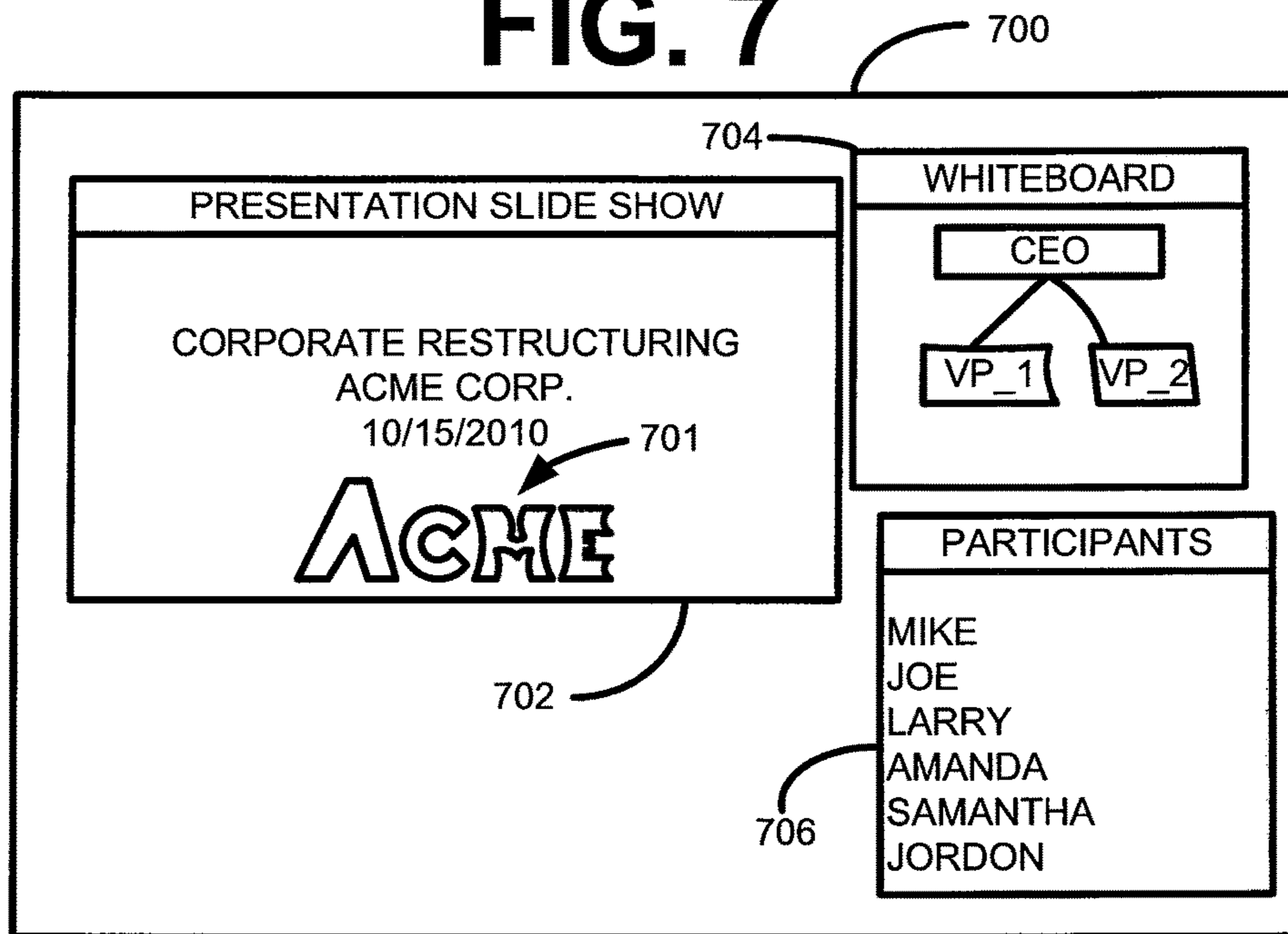


FIG. 8

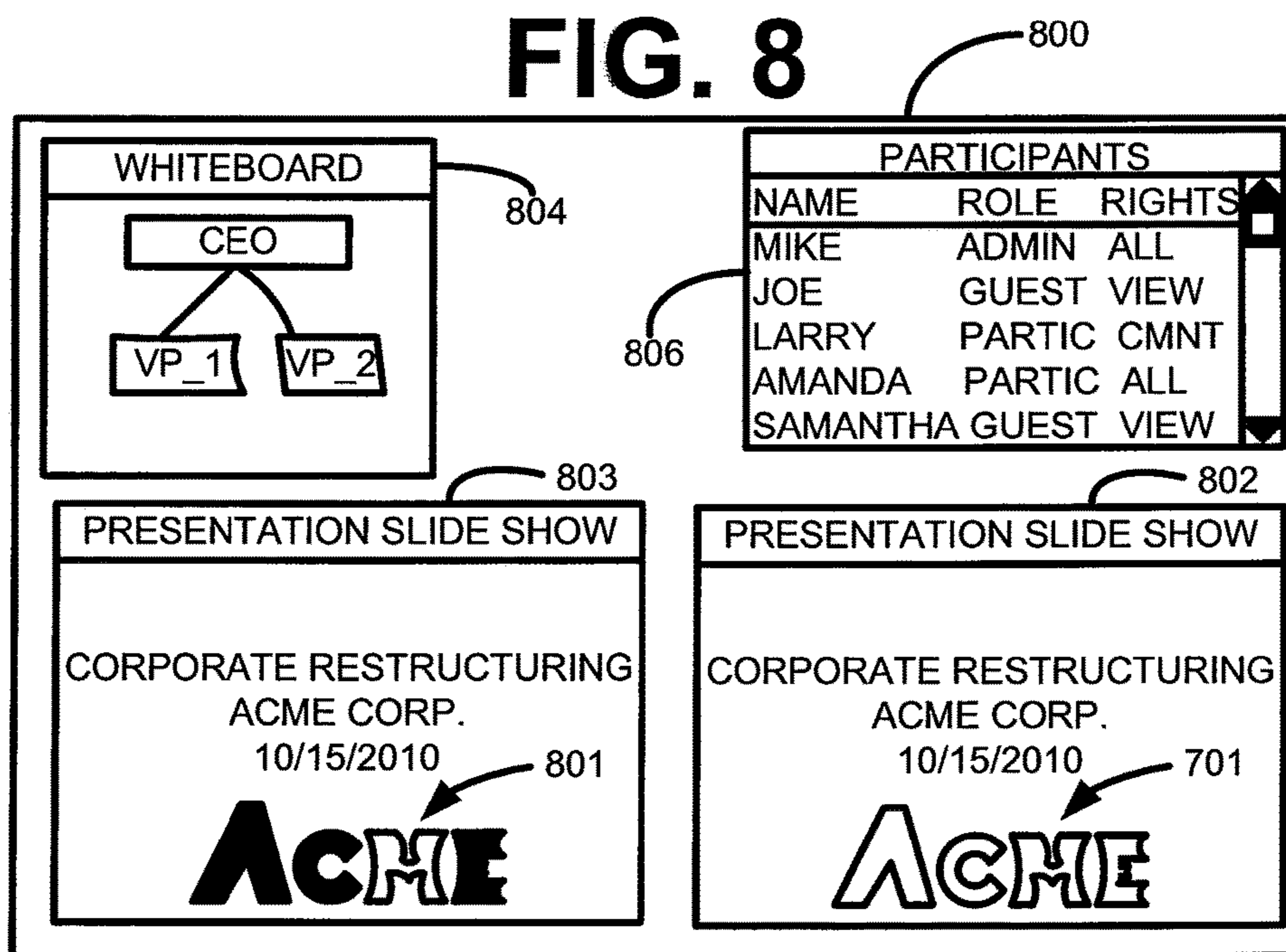


FIG. 9

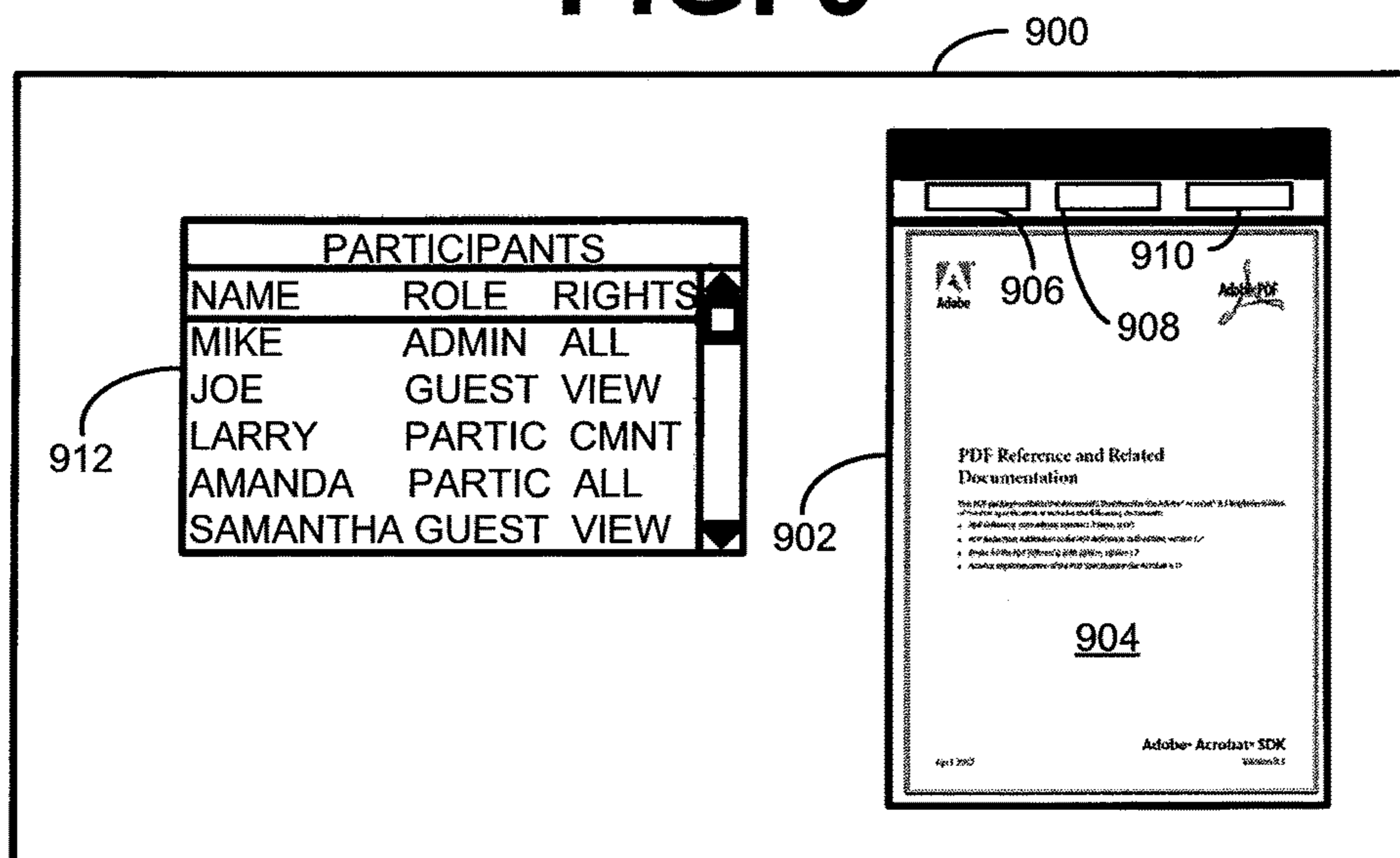
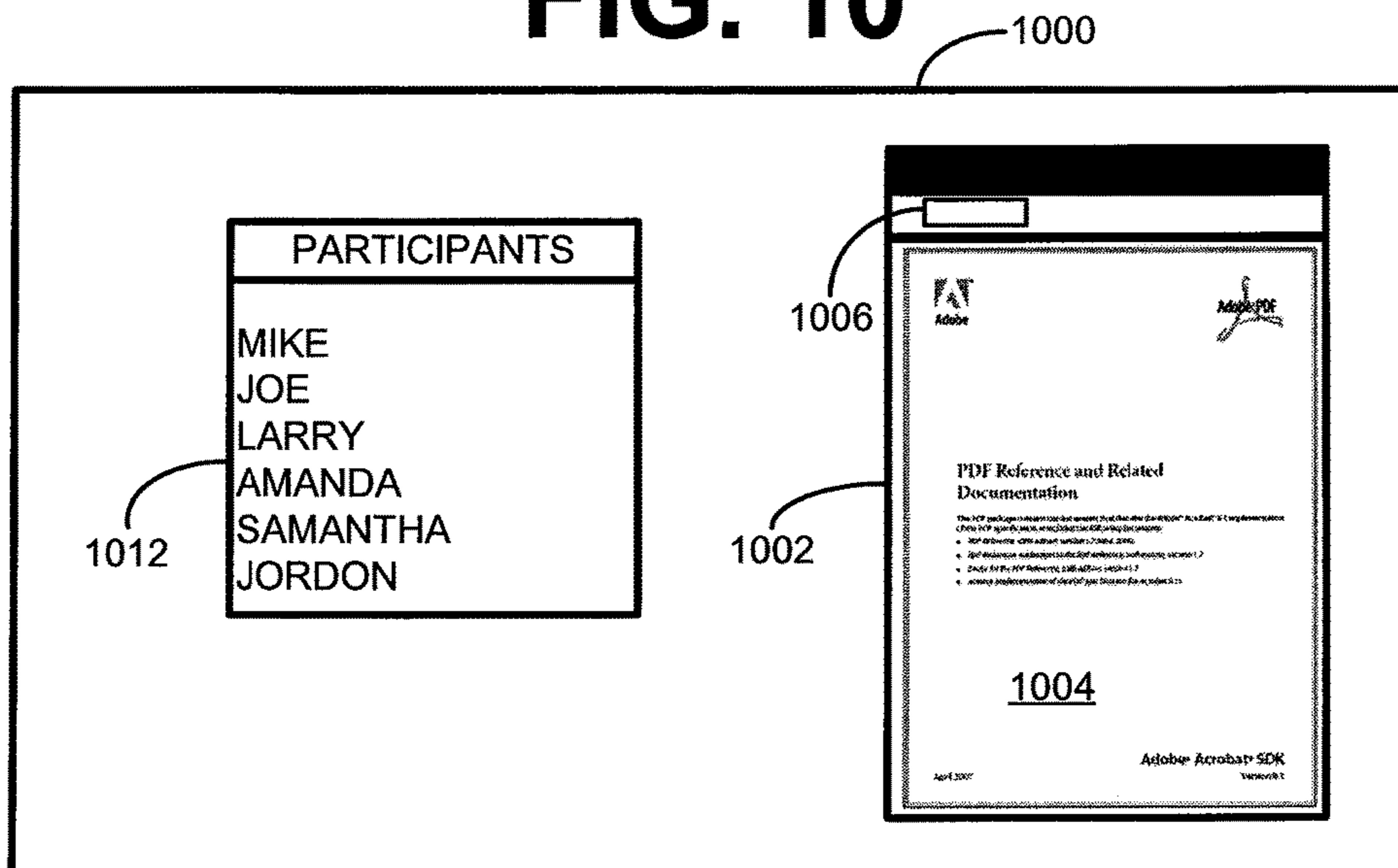
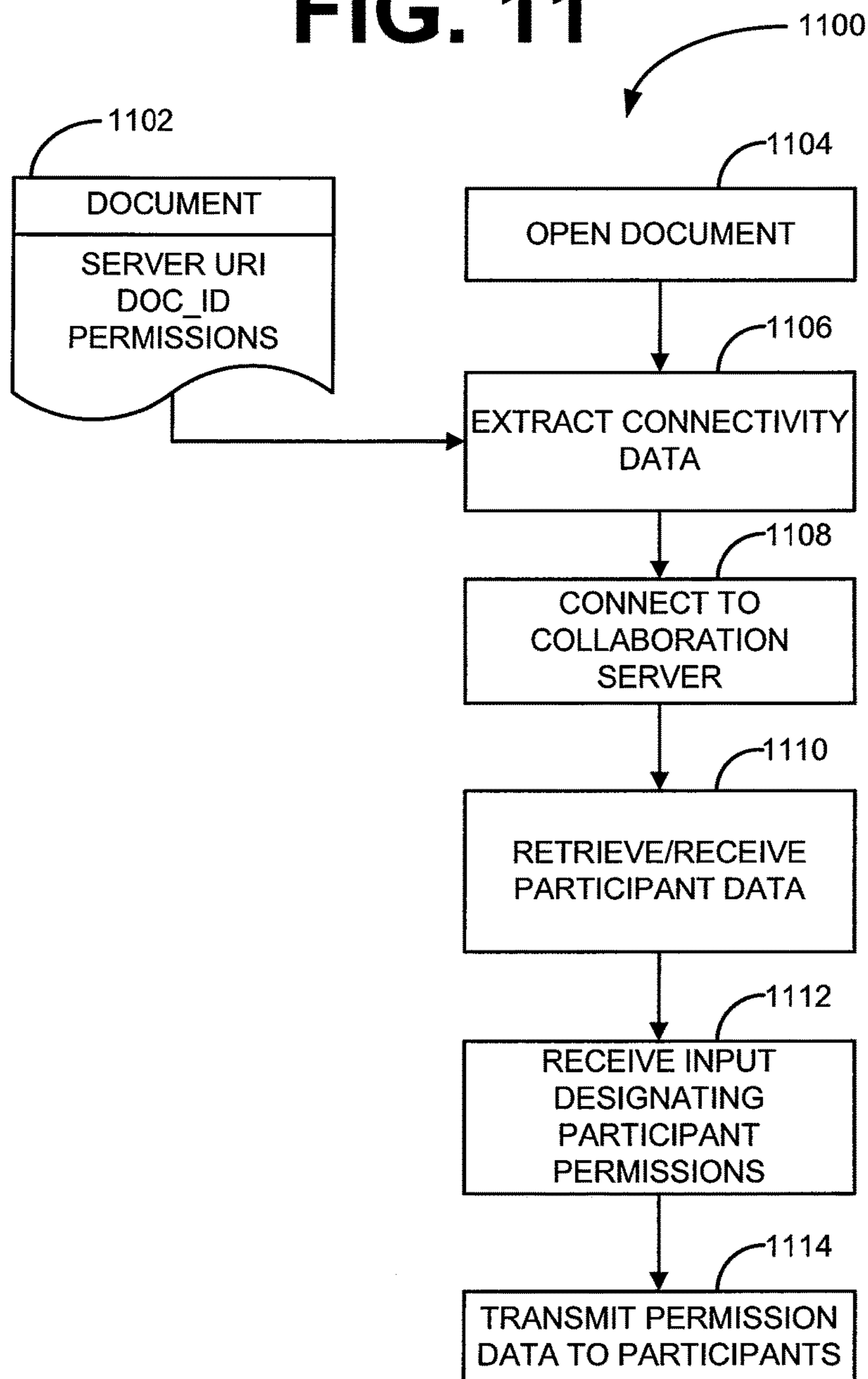


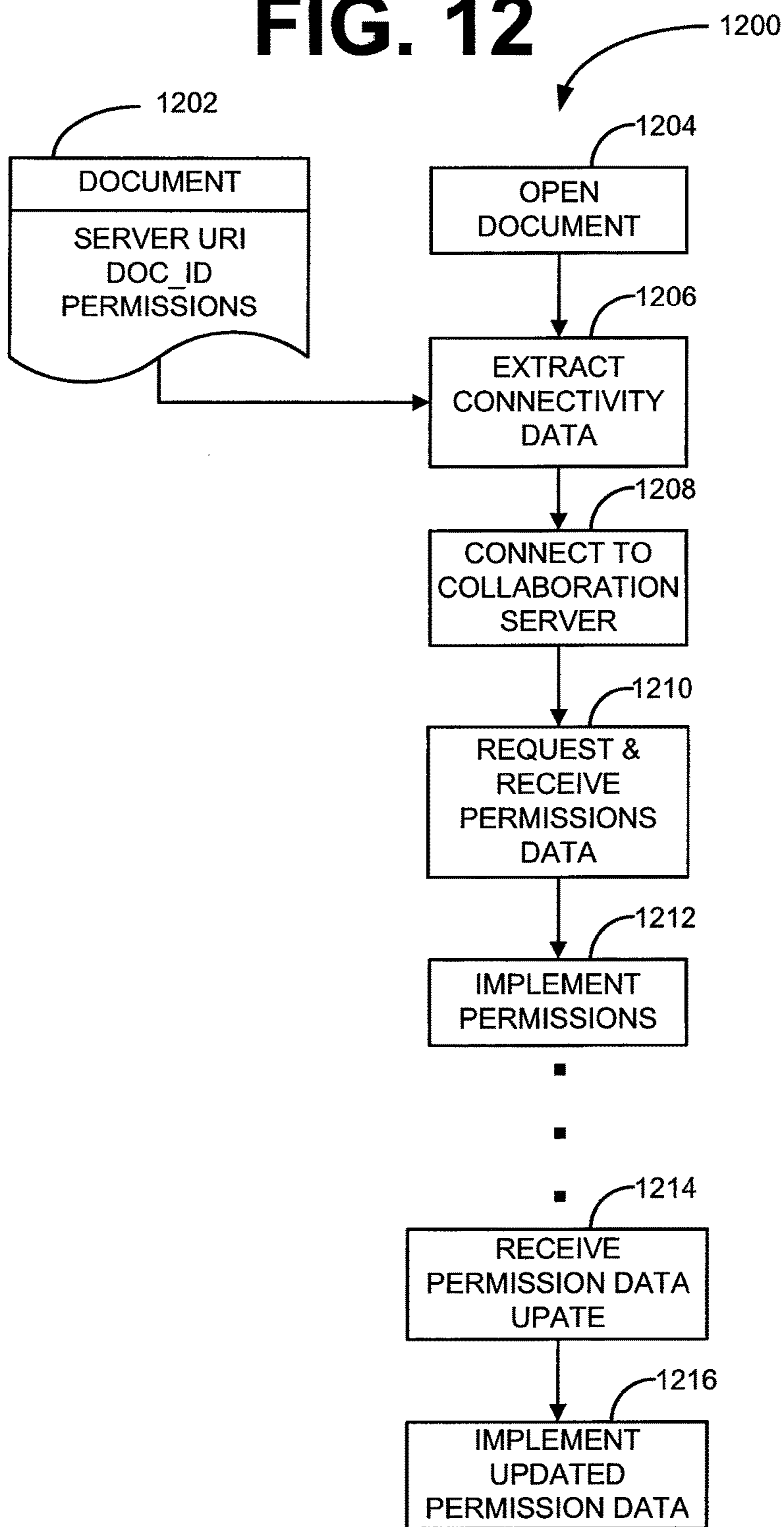
FIG. 10



# FIG. 11



# FIG. 12



## RIGHTS APPLICATION WITHIN DOCUMENT-BASED CONFERENCING

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Use of network hosted conferencing, such as over the Internet, has grown considerably in recent years. There are products on the market that allow a presenter to share views and audio over a central server with many conference participants. Some of these products may also be used in a collaborative environment, such as between members of a development team. In such instances, control of a computer or computer application on one computer may be shared over a network with other users. Such products offer such functionally in a very similar manner through a server that requires a standalone client software application on each computer of each participant. Such client software is tightly coupled to a server that receives images of shared data from one client and distributes the image data to other participating clients. The client software is typically created and distributed by the same developer of the server software to prevent compatibility and security issues between the client and server software.

Use of such conferencing technologies typically requires conferencing specific software, often in the form of a conferencing-specific standalone application or a conferencing specific plug-in, to be present on each participant's computing device. Such participants then must provide login credentials to connect to the conference.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a system according to an example embodiment.

FIG. 2 is a block diagram of a client system according to an example embodiment.

FIG. 3 is a block diagram of a server system according to an example embodiment.

FIG. 4 is a block diagram of service modules included within a server system according to an example embodiment.

FIG. 5 is a block flow diagram of a method according to an example embodiment.

FIG. 6 is a block flow diagram of a method according to an example embodiment.

FIG. 7 illustrates a user interface according to an example embodiment.

FIG. 8 illustrates a user interface according to an example embodiment.

FIG. 9 illustrates a user interface according to an example embodiment.

FIG. 10 illustrates a user interface according to an example embodiment.

FIG. 11 is a block flow diagram of a method according to an example embodiment.

FIG. 12 is a block flow diagram of a method according to an example embodiment.

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION

Although current conferencing applications provide many abilities, some of these abilities are limited. Various embodiments described herein provide one or more of systems, methods, software, and data structures that allow a document, or other file type, to be used to connect to a network-based conference, such as over the Internet, where a view of a local copy of the document is synchronized between

participants. Participation abilities of certain network-based conference participants may be limited in such embodiments. Such limits may be enforced locally for each participant, on a server by preventing data representative of certain actions from being broadcast to other participants, or in other ways as described and would be readily apparent herein.

Some embodiments may further allow a local copy of a document, viewed by each conference participant on their local computing devices, to be used as a conferencing tool by synchronizing document views across each local document copy and edits or other modifications and notations made by each participant. As a result, an actual image of the document of a document-based conference need not be shared. Rather, only the edits or other modifications and notations made by each participant need to be captured, transmitted, and recreated and displayed within the local document copies of the other participants. Such a local copy of a document may include permissions data of a user that instructs a local document viewing or editing application as to a local user's permissions regard the document.

A document author, or other individual in possession of an electronic copy of the document, or other electronic file type, may enable network-based conferencing based on the document. In some such embodiments, the document author, or other individual in possession of an electronic copy of the document, may enable one or more collaboration sessions based on the document itself and designate permissions to perform actions with regard to the document by one or more individuals, groups, roles, and the like. Such collaboration designation typically includes selecting a collaboration server to host the collaboration, creating a unique identifier of the document, and storing a Uniform Resource Identifier ("URI"), such as a Uniform Resource Locator ("URL"), of the collaboration server and the unique document identifier in the document. The electronic document may then be distributed by virtually any means. Then, when the document is opened by an appropriate application, the application extracts the URI and the unique document identifier and connects to the collaboration server according to the URI for a conference based on the document identified by the unique document identifier. Permissions embedded in a document may then be applied to limit the actions a user may take with regard to the document in the context of a document-based conference. In some embodiments, the permissions may alternatively be downloaded from a service of the collaboration server or be broadcast by and received from the collaboration server or administrator of a document-based conference. These and other embodiments are described in detail below.

Note the term "document" is used interchangeably with the term "file," unless expressly stated otherwise or as is readily apparent from the meaning of the language herein. Thus, "document," is intended to represent an electronic file that may be a document, such as an electronic document authored using a word processing application, or other electronic file type that may be opened for viewing and/or editing.

In the following detailed description, reference is made to the accompanying drawings that form a part hereof, and in which is shown by way of illustration specific embodiments in which the inventive subject matter may be practiced. These embodiments are described in sufficient detail to enable those skilled in the art to practice them, and it is to be understood that other embodiments may be utilized and that structural, logical, and electrical changes may be made without departing from the scope of the inventive subject

matter. Such embodiments of the inventive subject matter may be referred to, individually and/or collectively, herein by the term “invention” merely for convenience and without intending to voluntarily limit the scope of this application to any single invention or inventive concept if more than one is in fact disclosed.

The following description is, therefore, not to be taken in a limited sense, and the scope of the inventive subject matter is defined by the appended claims.

The functions or algorithms described herein are implemented in hardware, software or a combination of software and hardware in one embodiment. The software comprises computer executable instructions stored on computer readable media such as memory or other type of storage devices. Further, described functions may correspond to modules, which may be software, hardware, firmware, or any combination thereof. Multiple functions are performed in one or more modules as desired, and the embodiments described are merely examples. The software is executed on a digital signal processor, ASIC, microprocessor, or other type of processor operating on a system, such as a personal computer, server, a router, or other device capable of processing data including network interconnection devices.

Some embodiments implement the functions in two or more specific interconnected hardware modules or devices with related control and data signals communicated between and through the modules, or as portions of an application-specific integrated circuit. Thus, the exemplary process flow is applicable to software, firmware, and hardware implementations.

FIG. 1 is a block diagram of a system 100 according to an example embodiment. The system 100 typically includes a server 102 that may communicate with clients 110 over a network 108. The server 102 may offer one or more collaboration services 104 to the clients 110 through web service calls that may be sent to and received from the collaboration services 104 over the network 108.

In some embodiments, the collaboration services 104, when called or otherwise utilized, may consume, manipulate, create, or store data. This data may be stored on the server 102, on another server, in a database 106, or in another data storage location. In some embodiments, this data may include data identifying document identifiers of documents setup for document-based conferencing; authorized users; user or organizational collaboration service subscription, usage, and permission information; configuration settings; and other data that may be consumed, manipulated, created, or stored during operation of one or more of the collaboration services 104.

The collaboration services 104 divide functionality of collaboration applications to allow other applications, such as document-based conferencing enabled applications, to leverage collaboration functionality. This provides the potential to develop any number of different kinds of client 110 applications that all rely on the same collaboration services 104. Accordingly, a developer may conveniently add new features to a client 110, leveraging a provided set of collaboration services 104. For example, one embodiment may expose streaming audio/video, data messaging, and presence, user identity, roles, and the like as services that may be leveraged by client applications. In one such embodiment, document-based conferencing abilities may be embedded within a document editing application and such conferencing may be conducted to share a view of a document, and even document editing capability, with each

conference participant along with a shared audio/video stream, text-based data messaging, and participant identity data.

Some embodiments may also include security functionality that may block the use of one or more modules, or services thereof. Such embodiment may block such functionality as a function of a document identifier and the identity of a document-based conference participant in view of permission designations. The permission designations are specified by a participant, such as a document author, having permissions to manipulate permissions data with regard to the document upon which a conference is based.

However, in some other embodiments, the server 102 and service modules 104 thereof may not maintain a persistent record of permissions for a particular document-based conference. In such embodiments, permission data may be embedded in a document, communicated from a conference administrator to conference participants via a generic data service of one of the service modules 104. Such permissions data may then be implemented on the collaboration server to allow or prevent actions of possessors of a document upon which a conference is based. Such permissions, in some embodiments, may also be implemented within local participant applications by enabling and disabling certain functionality, such as menu items and action buttons. In typical embodiments though, permissions are enforced at least on the collaboration server as a function of a document identifier and participant identifier included in each collaboration service call in view of permission settings for the combination of the document and participant identifiers.

In addition, as mentioned above, previous collaboration applications required that everything performed by a server be tightly bound to one specific client. To the contrary, some embodiments may include a cloud of servers, dedicated to provisioning of collaboration services, which may host collaboration rooms or sessions of virtually any client, such as a document viewing or editing application used by each participant of a document-based conference. Further, any number of variations and types of clients may be specifically built and embedded within other applications, such as a graphics editing application, a page description language view application, a word processing application, and other typical stand alone application types. In one such embodiment, a first document-based conference participant may utilize an application that is not identical to an application utilized by a second conference participant. For example, the first participant may participate using a version of the Adobe® Acrobat® Standard application that is enabled for document-based conferencing and the second participant may participate using a version of the Adobe® Acrobat® Reader application that is enabled for document-based conferencing.

Some embodiments may be realized with respect to two parts. Firstly, one or more servers 102 may be dedicated, in whole or in part, or may be refactored from working with a specific application to working with any kind of client 110 collaboration application. Secondly, client 110 applications may be “componentized.” For example, clients 110 may be broken down so that any developer who wants to build a real-time collaboration application can reuse the specific client 110 components and include these components into client 110 applications or merge them into unique client 110 applications. By mixing and matching client 110 components, which know how to speak directly to a set of one or more services 104, a developer may build multiple variations of client applications 110 that enable real-time collaboration or other communication, such as communication

## 5

to enable document-based conferencing. Client-side components, such as webcam, rosters, shared whiteboards, text-based chat, and the like, are provided to developers. Each of such components relies on their specific and dedicated web service for the respective component type. However, in some embodiments, custom developed components may use one or more of the set of services 104 to provide desired functionality.

Some such embodiments provide a developer kit of controls or tools that may be embedded within client 110 applications and configured to communicate with the services 104 on one or more servers 102. Some embodiments, such as web-based embodiments and some stand-alone application embodiments, may include code that invokes a client plug-in, which may be a non-conferencing specific plug-in, such as the Adobe® Flash® player available from Adobe Systems Incorporated of San Jose, Calif., or other runtime client. In some embodiments, a plug-in may be utilized to enable document-based conferencing. Such a plug-in, in some embodiments, is enabled to capture input, user interface views, and data displayed within a user interface of an application the plug-in is attached to and share that data with other participants utilizing one or more of the services 104 of the server 102.

FIG. 2 is a block diagram of a client system 210 according to an example embodiment. In one embodiment, multiple such client systems 210 are utilized in a distributed network in a collaborative application environment. A service-oriented architecture may be used to implement such services and communicate between the multiple client systems 210 and collaboration services on a server. One example client system 210 in the form of a computer may include a processing unit 202, memory 204, removable storage 212, and non-removable storage 214. Memory 204 may include volatile memory 206 and non-volatile memory 208. Client system 210 may include—or have access to a computing environment that includes—a variety of computer-readable media, such as volatile memory 206 and non-volatile memory 208, removable storage 212 and non-removable storage 214. Computer storage includes random access memory (RAM), read only memory (ROM), erasable programmable read-only memory (EPROM) & electrically erasable programmable read-only memory (EEPROM), flash memory or other memory technologies, compact disc read-only memory (CD ROM), Digital Versatile Disks (DVD) or other optical disk storage, magnetic cassettes, magnetic tape, magnetic disk storage or other magnetic storage devices, or any other medium capable of storing computer-readable instructions. Client system 210 may include or have access to a computing environment that includes input 216, output 218, and a communication connection 220. The input 216 may include one or more of a pointing device such as a mouse, a keyboard, electronic pen type input, an audio input device such as a microphone coupled to an audio card or other dedicated audio circuit, a web cam, a screen capture program or device, or other input device. The output 218 may include a video monitor, speakers coupled to the audio card or other dedicated audio circuit, a printing device, or other output device.

The client system 210 typically operates in a networked environment using the communication connection 220 to connect to one or more remote computers, such as one or more servers offering collaborative services that enable collaboration between client system 210 and other remote computers. The remote computers may include one or more of a personal computer (“PC”), server, router, network PC, a peer device, or other common network node, and the like.

## 6

The communication connection 220 may include a Local Area Network (“LAN”), a Wide Area Network (“WAN”), the Internet, a Virtual Private Network (“VPN”), a peer-to-peer network, or other networks.

Computer-readable instructions stored on a computer-readable medium are executable by the processing unit 202 of the client system 210. A hard drive, CD-ROM, and RAM are some examples of articles including a computer-readable medium. For example, a computer program 225 implementing collaboration services of a collaboration server by capturing one or more of data, gestures, video, audio, and the like within the computer application 225 or on the client system and transmitting the captured data to a collaboration server utilizing web service calls. The collaboration server may then replicate the data and send the data to one or more remote computers. The computer program 225 may also receive such data from the collaboration server, the data originating on one or more remote computers. Upon receipt of data from the collaboration server, the data is parsed to identify a portion of the application to which the data pertains and then the data is evaluated to determine what to do. This may include replicating a computer program action represented in the data, replicating data, opening an audio or video stream, playing audio or video data, replicating a gesture action with a gesture tool such as a mouse, or other action or data modification, deletion, creation, or insertion. In some embodiments, the computer application 225 leverages functionality of a plug-in 226 to perform one or more functions such as capturing, outputting, encoding, and/or decoding collaboration data. As mentioned above, the plug-in may be the Adobe® Flash® player. However, in other embodiments, the plug-in 226, or another client component, may be a custom developed piece of software developed to implement one or more services offered by a collaboration server.

In some embodiments, the computer program 225 is a document editing or viewing application. Examples of such applications may include word processing applications, image and graphic authoring and editing applications, video editing applications, document viewing applications such as one or more of the various versions of the Adobe® Acrobat® application family, spreadsheet applications, and virtually any other user-interface-based computer application. In some such embodiments, the computer program 225 may include executable instructions to enable a document for document-based conferencing. Execution of such instructions may be triggered by selection of a menu item or other action within a user interface of the computer program 225. Such executable instructions may further include instructions to cause the computer program 225, when opening a document or upon receipt of a user command, to determine if a document is enabled for document-based conferencing, and if so, connect to a collaboration server identified within the document over the communication connection 220. The computer program 225 is also typically configured to capture input to the document, such as document modifications and notations, and send representations of that input to the collaboration server. The computer program 225, in some embodiments, may evaluate received input in view of one or more permissions a participant is granted prior to sending the input to the collaboration server. In some such embodiments, the evaluation of the received input may include an evaluation in view of local permissions data or a call of a service on the collaboration server to verify the ability to share representations of such input with other conference participants. The computer program 225 may also receive such input representations from the collaboration server that

originated with other conference participants and cause those input representations to be reflected within the document within the user interface of the computer program 225. Example methods performed by the computer program 225 are provided below with regard to FIG. 5, FIG. 6, FIG. 11 and FIG. 12.

FIG. 3 is a block diagram of a server system 310 according to an example embodiment. In one embodiment, multiple such server systems may be utilized in a distributed network to implement multiple services in a collaborative application environment. A service-oriented architecture may be used to implement such services and communicate between the multiple client systems utilizing collaboration services offered by the server system 310 and potential other server systems 310, depending on the embodiment. One example server system 310 is in the form of a computer, which may include a processing unit 302, memory 304, removable storage 312, and non-removable storage 314. Memory 304 may include volatile memory 306 and non-volatile memory 308. Computer 310 may include—or have access to a computing environment that includes—a variety of computer-readable media, such as volatile memory 306 and non-volatile memory 308, removable storage 312 and non-removable storage 314. Computer storage includes random access memory (RAM), read only memory (ROM), erasable programmable read-only memory (EPROM) & electrically erasable programmable read-only memory (EEPROM), flash memory or other memory technologies, compact disc read-only memory (CD ROM), Digital Versatile Disks (DVD) or other optical disk storage, magnetic cassettes, magnetic tape, magnetic disk storage or other magnetic storage devices, or any other medium capable of storing computer-readable instructions. Server system 310 may include or have access to a computing environment that includes input 316, output 318, and a communication connection 320. The computer may operate in a networked environment using the communication connection 320 to connect to one or more remote computers, such as one or more client systems 210 illustrated in and described with regard to FIG. 2. The communication connection 320 may include a Local Area Network (“LAN”), a Wide Area Network (“WAN”), the Internet, a Virtual Private Network (“VPN”), a peer-to-peer network, or other networks.

Computer-readable instructions stored on a computer-readable medium are executable by the processing unit 302 of the server system 310. A hard drive, CD-ROM, and RAM are some examples of articles including a computer-readable medium. The computer-readable medium, in an example embodiment, may include one or more service modules 325 that are operable to provide collaboration services, such as web services, to client collaboration applications. In typical embodiments, the collaboration service modules 325 are application and data agnostic, meaning that the collaboration service modules allow any application to call the collaboration services and the collaboration services may be a conduit for transmission of any data so long as an appropriate collaboration service is utilized.

For example, a client application, such as a client application enabled for document-based conferencing, may be developed to utilize a general collaboration service. The general collaboration service may only require that data received from a first client collaboration application, to be broadcast to one or more other client collaboration applications, include a minimal amount of specific data for the service to be called, and all other payload data included in the service call is broadcast to the other client collaboration applications without inspection. Further, the collaboration

services may only require that they be called in a particular manner, such as a proper formatting of the service calls, and do not require that they be called by a particular client program. As a result, any client application may utilize the services of the service modules 325 to collaborate with virtually any type of data the client applications may utilize. However, in some embodiments, client applications of particular users may be restricted from or allowed to use one or more services of one or more service modules as a function of permission designations. Enforcement of these permissions, in various embodiments, may be performed within client computer programs, such as computer program 225 of FIG. 2, by one or more services of one of the service modules 325, or though a combination thereof. FIG. 4, and its description below, provides detail as to the services modules 325 that may be available in some embodiments.

FIG. 4 is a block diagram of service modules 325 included within a server system 310, as illustrated in FIG. 3, according to an example embodiment. The service modules 325, as described above, provide services accessible over a network that may be utilized by client collaboration applications, which may include document-based conferencing enabled applications. The service modules typically receive data from a first client collaboration application through a web service call and broadcast the received data to other client collaboration applications participating in a collaboration session, such as by joining a collaboration “room.” In the context of document-based conferencing, the collaboration “room” used to conduct such a conference includes a document upon which the conference is based. For example, a document view may be shared using one or more of the collaboration services. However, in some embodiments, neither a view of the document nor the document’s contents are transmitted utilizing the service modules 325. Rather, a reference to a viewable portion of the document is transmitted utilizing one or more of the service modules 325 to allow client applications to synchronize a view of a copy of the document resident on the computing device of each participant. One or more of the service modules 325 may be further utilized to receive and transmit modifications to the document that is the subject of the conference.

A collaboration server, such as server system 310 of FIG. 3, typically provides several collaboration services. These collaboration services may be implemented through service modules 325, which may be objects, programs, application programming interfaces, or other units of software. In some embodiments, each service is embodied in a single module. In other embodiments, multiple services are embodied in a single module. Combinations of services within modules may be made based on a class of functionality, such as by the type of data communicated through the module, the type of communication, such as inbound or outbound, or in virtually any other manner. In another embodiment, a single generic data service is offered by a single service module 325. Thus, although the service modules 325 are described below as providing certain services, these services may be provided in a single module, a few modules, or many modules. The name given to the particular 325 module in the following description is given merely to describe the type of functionality the particular service module is provided for and is not intended to limit modules within which services may be included.

The service modules 325 may include modules to implement functionality, such as: roster, chat, polling, notes, screen sharing, web cam or other streaming video, shared white board, file transfer, transfer of data to enable peer-to-peer (“P2P”) communication between two or more client



applications, audio and visual, general data transfer, gesture tool (such as a pointing device or cursor), user interface controls, administration, and others depending on the embodiment.

A roster service module, in some embodiments, offers services to identify collaboration session participants and present participant information in a roster type control within one or more client collaboration applications connected to a collaboration session. The roster module may also provide services to identify and implement roles of one or more collaboration session participants, such as organizer, presenter, administrator, participant, and the like. Such roles may be declared using administrative services of the administration module. Such roles may allow or limit certain functionality of collaboration session participants.

The administration module may also be used to create or schedule a collaboration session, authorize participants of a collaboration session, modify or create participant roles and permissions, declare a collaboration session as closed to a finite number of participants, certain participants, or publicly available.

The chat service module typically provides services that enable text-based chat between collaboration session participants. In some embodiments, the chat services may allow a participant to send a chat message to less than all of the other participants if desired. In some embodiments, based on a permissions of a certain role as declared in the administration service module, messages of a particular participant may be blocked from transmission to other participants, such as in the event the block participant is abusing the chat functionality. Chat messages may also be sent to an administrator for approval prior to communication to other collaboration session participants.

The polling service module typically allows one participant to set up a poll for other participants to answer. The polling service module may then collect the results of the poll and present them to the creator. The polling results may also be shared with one or more other participants.

The note service module typically provides services that allow transmission of a note to one or more other participants. This may include a text block placed as a control on a certain portion of a shared screen view. The Screen share service module provides services to share a screen view of one client application with other participants. The screen share services may also allow sharing control of the screen, such as allowing one or more other participants to provide input via a keyboard and pointing device.

The web cam service module typically provides services to share streaming video between collaboration session participants. In some embodiments, use of the web cam service module services may be configured through services of one or more of the administration and web cam service modules to limit the number of shared video streams or allow only a presenter's video stream to be displayed. A shared video stream may also include audio.

The white board service module provides services to receive and share whiteboard type input. Whiteboard input typically includes drawings made within a virtual whiteboard. As with the streaming video services described above, use of the whiteboard services may be limited to only a presenter and/or other roles.

The file transfer service module typically includes services that allow one collaboration session participant to upload a file and transfer the file to all, or a select number of, other participants. For example, a file may be uploaded and designated for transmission to one or more specific participants based on identity data from the roster service

module, participants having a particular role or permission level, participants in a certain department or geographic location based on data which may be stored in a location accessible to a client collaboration application or accessible by a service module service, or based on other criteria.

The P2P service module includes services to facilitate exchange of network connectivity data between two or more users to establish a peer-to-peer communication connection between the users over a network. In some such embodiments, once the network connectivity data has been exchanged utilizing a service of the P2P service module, two or more client collaboration applications may exchange collaboration data directly with one another. In some such embodiments, a collaboration session may then be conducted, in whole or in part, in a P2P fashion.

The audio/visual service module includes services to exchange audio, video, and combined audio and video, such as in streams, between collaboration session participants. In some embodiments, the audio and video services may be unidirectional, meaning that audio and video of only one participant is shared at a time as set utilizing one or more services of the audio/visual or administration service modules. The audio services, in some embodiments, may include Voice over Internet Protocol ("VoIP") services. Audio and visual data may also be administered to be shared only by or with certain individual participants or participants having a particular role.

The gesture tool service module may include services to share gestures made by participants with a pointing device, such as a mouse, a cursor within an application, a highlighting tool, or other gesturing device. The user interface controls service module may include services that are specific to certain user interface controls. In some embodiments, user interface control services identify a particular control within client collaboration applications and an action with regard to that control, such as "has focus," "clicked," typed text, submit, or other action.

The data service module includes services to allow exchange of free-form data between collaboration applications. Such services are data and application agnostic, meaning that the data service module does not process the service calls to verify the data came from a specific type of application or that the data is of a particular type or in a particular format. These services merely require that the service be called or invoked in a proper manner. Such services allow application developers to create customized application elements and share data in a collaborative fashion between the elements. Such application elements may include elements that capture data within applications that is to be shared with collaboration session participants. Such data may include text from documents, numeric data from spreadsheets, data indicative of actions performed within an application, or other data within virtually any other application. In some embodiments, the data services may be embedded within an application in a manner that is not visible, or otherwise apparent to a user. In some document-based conferencing embodiments, the document editing applications of participants utilize the data service module to as the conduit to share data of document modifications, to synchronize views, and exchange data of ancillary communication tools such as shared whiteboards, rosters, audio and video, and other such tools. This data, once captured, may be transmitted using the services of the data service module and communicated to other participants. The other participants receive this data and the application will handle the data as specified by a developer of the application. Thus, using the services of the data service module, custom applications may be developed

with customized collaboration features to capture data and actions and receive and process or display those actions within application instances of collaboration session participants.

The application capture service module includes services to allow sharing of edits or other modifications and notations made by each participant of a document-based conference. In some embodiments, the application capture service module includes services that may be utilized based on the type of modification made. For example, if a textual edit is made to a document, a service may be called referencing an addressable location within the document, such as a page and line number, and a textual change to make. This may include a service call to replace text, delete text, or insert text. In other embodiments, such as when the document is an image file, the addressable location may be a pixel address or pixel address range of pixels to modify and data identifying how the pixels are to be modified. In further embodiments, such as when the document is an audio or video file, the data addressable location may be identified with regard to a time element, such as time range, 34 seconds to 53 seconds, and data instructing that the audio or video data in that range be deleted or replaced with data included with the service call. Other embodiments may include other addressing mechanisms that are relevant to the particular document upon which the document-based conference is based.

The application synchronization service module includes services that may be utilized to synchronize views of local document copies. For example, in document-based conferencing, each conference participant has a local copy of the document upon which the conference is based. An application synchronization module service may be present in some embodiments that may be called to synchronize the local document copy views of the document with the document view of a participant application calling the service. In some embodiments, such a view synchronization service of the application synchronization service module may be called using an address portion, such as a page number, and a zoom factor. The address portion may vary based on the document type and the precision to which a synchronized view may need to be made. For example, if the document is an image file, the address portion may be a range of pixels, such as in the X dimension at pixels 345-679 and in the Y dimension at pixels 455-567.

In some further embodiments, the service modules 325 comprise only a single, generic service module that may take the form similar to that of the data service module described above. In such embodiments, client applications that call such a module include data in a payload when calling the service that will be understood by recipient applications of other participants. Such payload data may include data identifying how or what process is to process the remainder of the data payload.

In some embodiments, one or more of the service modules 325 may include a service that may be polled by a document-based conferencing application of conference participants to obtain permissions data held in a memory or data storage location of a collaboration server. In other embodiments, a service may be provided by one or more of the service modules 325 to authenticate a participant's ability to perform a certain action or share certain data amongst conference participants with regard to a document that is the subject of a document-based conference.

Note that, in some embodiments, the applications of collaboration session participants are not required to be identical applications. What is required is that the respective applications of the participants be enabled to communicate

utilizing the services of the service modules 325 of the server system 310 illustrated and described with regard to FIG. 3 and FIG. 4.

FIG. 5 is a block flow diagram of a method 500 according to an example embodiment. The method 500 is one embodiment of how a computer program, such as a word processing application, page description language viewing or editing application, graphics or other audio/visual application, or other application may designate a document for document-based conferencing.

In some embodiments, when viewing, or otherwise working with a document, on a computing device, the method 500 is a computerized method and includes generating 502 an identifier of a document and receiving 504 a designation of a collaboration server.

Generating 502 an identifier of the document may include generating a hash value as a function of the document and attaching the hash value to a Globally Unique Identifier ("GUID") of the computing device. In other embodiments, the generating the document identifier may include calling a service of a collaboration server to obtain a document identifier. Other embodiments may include other modes of generating 502 a document identifier, however the goal of the selected mode is to generate 502 a document identifier that is attributable to the specific document on a particular collaboration server.

Receiving 504 a designation of a collaboration server, in some embodiments, includes receiving user input of a URI, such as a URL, of a particular collaboration server. The user input of the URI may be received through text input, through a selection of a collaboration server from a list of collaboration servers provided to the user by the user's application performing the method 500, by a default configuration setting of the user's application performing the method 500, or other suitable input mechanisms.

The method 500 further includes embedding 506 the identifier of the document and a representation of the designated collaboration server within data of the document and storing 508 the document. The embedding 506 of the document identifier and the representation of the designated collaboration server, in some embodiments, includes encoding the document identifier and collaboration server representation in a metadata form and placing the metadata within the data of the document. Depending on the document type and the particular embodiment, the metadata is typically placed within the document data in a location that will not affect the appearance of the document when viewed graphically within an application user interface. Such a location is often a file header or file trailer of the document file. However, depending on the file type, the location where the metadata is placed may be elsewhere.

After the method 500 has been performed and the document is stored 508, the document file may be distributed to others. The document file may be distributed by virtually any means including email, on a portable compute-medium such as a disk, USB memory device, external hard disk, or other medium, via download from a network location such as a web site or network drive, or other distribution methods. Those in possession of such a document may then participate in a document-based conference by opening the document in appropriate document-based conferencing application that will connect the holder of the document copy to the document-based conference. Note that in some embodiments, mere possession of the document file allows participation in such a document-based conference using an appropriate document-based conferencing application. However, in some other embodiments, user credentials may also be

required, such as one or more of identity information, a user ID, and a password that may be provided via a user interface of the document-based conferencing application. In some embodiments, a document upon which a document-based conference is based may be password protected. In some

5 such embodiments, the document password may be the same as a password that may be required to connect to the document based conference. The password may only need to be provided to open the document and the password is provided automatically by a document editing or viewing

10 application when necessary to connect to the collaboration server for the document based conference.

In some embodiments, the user credentials may be used to determine or request permissions to allow a conference participant to perform certain actions with regard to the document and to share information with and receive information from other participants.

FIG. 6 is a block flow diagram of a method 600 according to an example embodiment. The method 600 is one embodiment of how a computer program, such as a word processing application, page description language viewing or editing application, graphics or other audio/visual application, or other application may process a document file enabled for document-based conferencing.

The method 600 is a computerized method and includes opening 602 a document and determining if the document includes document-based conferencing connectivity data. Document-based conferencing connectivity data typically includes a document identifier and an address of a collaboration server, or an address identifying a specific collaboration session for the document on the collaboration server. In some embodiments, the document identifier and collaboration server address are a combined into a single data item. The determining if the document includes document-based conferencing connectivity data typically includes reading at least a portion of the document file, such as a file header, file trailer, or other identifiable file location, to determine if the connectivity data, such as in a metadata form, is present. If the document-based conferencing connectivity data is present, the method 600 includes extracting 604 a URI of a

20 collaboration server and a document identifier, or other connectivity data depending on the embodiment.

The method 600 further includes connecting 606 to a collaboration session on the collaboration server as a function of the Uniform Resource Identifier and the document identifier and identifying 608 a viewable area of at least a portion of the document. The viewable area of the document is an area identified 608 as a function of the local document copy. The method 600 further includes synchronizing 610 the viewable area of the at least a portion of the document with data sent to and received from the collaboration server. The data sent to the collaboration server includes data representative of modifications made to the local document copy. The data received from the collaboration server includes data representative of changes made by other collaboration session participants to their respective local document copies. The data received from the collaboration server is used to replicate, within the local document copy, the changes made to the document by the other participants. In some embodiments, the changes may be replicated directly within the content of the local document copy. In other embodiments, the changes may be made, or optionally made, as markups to the local document copy that may be accepted or rejected.

In some embodiments, synchronizing 610 the viewable area of the at least the portion of the document with data sent to and received from the collaboration server includes

tracking actions with regard to the document to identify document modifications and sending data representative of one or more modifications to the document. The data sent to and received from the collaboration server includes data representative of document modifications, the data including an identifier of at least one document location and instructions to change the at least one identified document location.

FIG. 7 and FIG. 8 illustrate user interfaces according to example embodiments. FIG. 7 includes a user interface 700 of a first participant of a document-based conference and FIG. 8 includes a user interface 800 of a second participant of the document-based conference. The user interfaces 700, 800 are user interfaces of applications enabled for document-based conferencing. Such applications may include, as discussed above, document editing and presentation applications, image and video editing and presentation applications, audio and data editing and presentation applications, and other applications that may allow viewing and/or editing of other types of data. FIG. 7 and FIG. 8 are discussed in parallel to provide examples of how one user interface may be modified and how those modifications are reflected in the other user interface. Thus, to know which of FIG. 7 and FIG. 8 is referred to, the 700 reference numbers refer to FIG. 7 and the 800 reference numbers refer to FIG. 8.

The user interface 700 includes a local document copy view 702 that is synchronized with a local document copy view 802 of the user interface 800. In operation, if the local document copy view 702, 802 of either user interface 700, 800 is modified, the applications providing the user interfaces 700, 800 send and receive data to synchronize their respective views 702, 802. The data sent to synchronize the views 702, 802 may be communicated via a collaboration server as discussed above. In other embodiments, the applications behind the user interfaces 700, 800 may communicate in a P2P manner.

The views 702, 802 of the local document copies, as illustrated, are views of a presentation slide show. When one view, such as view 702 is advanced one slide, a representation of a command to advance the view 802 one slide may be sent to the application behind the user interface 800, such as via a collaboration server, to cause the view 802 to advance one slide. In some embodiments, a change may be made to one or views 702, 802.

In some embodiments, one or more of the user interfaces, such as user interface 800, may also include a second view 803 of a document of a document-based conference. The second view 803 may be a clean copy of a document file upon which a document-based conference is being conducted. In some embodiments, such a view 803 may be modified or viewed differently without affecting a view of another participant. For example, both local document views 702, 802 include an "ACME" logo 701 include all outline, block style letters. A user may modify the "ACME" logo 801 of the view 803 to include three solid, non-outlined letters without the change being viewable with in the other shared views 702, 802. In other embodiments, the shared views 702, 802 may be modified and the second, non-shared view 803 is not affected.

The user interfaces 700, 800 may also include other elements such as roster elements 806, whiteboard elements 704, and other elements that may utilize one or more of the service modules 325 discussed above with regard to FIG. 3 and FIG. 4.

In some embodiments, as briefly discussed above, the user interfaces 700, 800 may be generated by a computer application operable on a computing device of each participant. Such an application typically includes a conferencing mod-

ule operable to extract conference connectivity data from a dataset, such as a local copy of a document file. A portion of that dataset typically includes the connectivity data and another portion of the dataset includes data that is display-  
 5 able within a user interface **700**, **800**. Such an application is also operable to connect to a collaboration server identified in the extracted conference connectivity data and join a conference as a function of data included in the conference connectivity data. Once connected, the application is oper-  
 10 able to receive data from the collaboration server and present at least a portion of the received data within the data viewing user interface. In some embodiments, rather than connecting to a collaboration server, the connection is made to at least one other client computing device operating a  
 15 compatible application and the document-based conference is conducted in a P2P manner between two or more participants.

FIG. **9** and FIG. **10** illustrate user interfaces according to example embodiments. FIG. **9** includes a user interface **900**  
 20 of a first participant of a document-based conference and FIG. **10** includes a user interface **1000** of a second participant of the document-based conference. The user interfaces **900**, **1000** are user interfaces of applications enabled for document-based conferencing. Such applications may include, as discussed above, document editing and presen-  
 25 tation applications, image and video editing and presentation applications, audio and data editing and presentation applications, and other applications that may allow viewing and/or editing of other types of data. FIG. **9** and FIG. **10** are discussed in parallel to provide examples of how one user interface may be modified and how those modifications are reflected in the other user interface. Thus, to know which of  
 30 FIG. **9** and FIG. **10** is referred to, the **900** reference numbers refer to FIG. **9** and the **1000** reference numbers refer to FIG. **10**.

The user interface **900** includes a document editing application interface **902** and a roster element **912**. The document editing user interface **902** includes a document view **904** and three action buttons **906**, **908**, **910**. The actions buttons **906**,  
 40 **908**, **910**, although illustrated as buttons, are representative of user interface controls. Such controls in various embodiments may include one or more of action buttons, menu items, popup menus, keyboard key-combinations, and other controls that may be used to manipulate a view or content  
 45 within the document view **904**.

The roster element **912** of the user interface **900** includes a listing of web conference participants and permission settings of each web conference participant or one or more groups of participants. The roster element **912** is a roster  
 50 element typically viewable only to a participant that is organizing or has similar permissions, such as an administrator. In some embodiments, the roster element **912** may be used to manipulate permission settings of web conference participants. The roster element **912** typically receives input modifying participant permissions and then broadcasts those permission settings to the participants via a collaboration server. In some embodiments, the roster element **912** may connect to a service module of the collaboration server as a function of a document identifier and create and store  
 60 participant permission settings with regard to the document of the document identifier. Such permission settings may affect how other participants are allowed to participate in a document-based conference and what may be done with the document by one or more of the participants, such as  
 65 scrolling or modifying the document, while connected to the document-based conference.

The user interface **1000** also includes a document editing user interface **1002** and a roster element **1012**. The document editing user interface **1002** is similar to the document editing interface **902**, but the document editing interface  
 5 **1002** includes only one action button **906**. The omission of other action buttons is an illustration of how a permission setting of a web conference participant may affect the abilities of the web conference participant while participating in a document-based conference. Some embodiments  
 10 may cause action buttons, or other elements such as menu items to disappear or be otherwise disabled. However, other embodiments include blocking transmission of data representative of actions limited by a permission setting. In some other embodiments, rather than action buttons, menu items,  
 15 and other user interface controls being disabled, all of such controls are enabled and the permissions are enforced instead at the collaboration server. Yet other embodiments include a set of one or more user interface controls that default to disabled when connected to a document-based  
 20 conference. Those user interface controls may then be enabled based on received permission data.

The roster element **1012** is an example of a non-administrator roster element. The roster element **1012** may be an identical element as the roster element **912**, but provide a different view when the participant does not have adminis-  
 25 trator level permissions with regard to a particular document-based conference.

FIG. **11** is a block flow diagram of a method **1100** according to an example embodiment. The method **1100** is a method that may be performed by a document-based conferencing application when used to initiate a document-  
 30 based conference. In such embodiments, a document **1102**, such as a document encoded according to a page description language format specification, is the subject of a document-based conference to be initiated. The document **1102**, as discussed above, includes a URI of a collaboration server and a document identifier. In some embodiments, the document **1102** may also include a data container for holding permission data that may be evaluated to determine permis-  
 35 sions of a document-based conference participant.

The method **1100** includes opening **1104** the document **1102** and extracting **1106** the connectivity data. The extracted **1106** connectivity data is then used to connect **1108** to the collaboration server. Some embodiments of the method **1100** may then retrieve **1110** web conference participant data, such as data identifying connected, invited,  
 45 likely, or a universe of participants or other users. In some embodiments, the retrieving **1110** may actually be more of a receiving of the participant data that may be pushed, in some embodiments, upon connecting to the collaboration server.

The method **1100** may further include receiving **1112** input designating participant permissions. The input may include a modification to an existing participant permission setting. Such designations, as discussed above, may include preventing one or more participants from sharing view synchronizing data, document modifications, use of a text-based data messaging tool, or shared whiteboard element. The representations of such permission designations may  
 55 then be transmitted **1114** to participants, such as via a collaboration server. In some embodiments, the transmitting of permissions may include storing the permission designations in the document **1102** and then distributing the document **1102**.

FIG. **12** is a block flow diagram of a method **1200** according to an example embodiment. The method **1200** is a method that may be performed to connect to a document-

based conference. Some elements of the method **1200** may be performed while participating in a document-based conference.

In such embodiments, a document **1202** is the subject of a document-based conference to be initiated. The document **1202**, as discussed above, includes a URI of a collaboration server and a document identifier, although these may be combined into a single data item. In some embodiments, the document **1202** may also include a data container for holding permission data that may be evaluated to determine permissions of a document-based conference participant with regard to the document.

The method **1200** typically includes opening **1204** the document **1202** and extracting **1206** the document-based conference connectivity data. The connectivity data is then used to connect **1208** to the collaboration server. If the permissions data is not stored in the document **1202**, the method **1200** may include requesting and receiving **1210** permissions data from the collaboration server. The permission data is then implemented **1212**. Such implementation may enable or disable functionality of a document-based conferencing application performing the method **1200**.

Some embodiments may also include receiving **1214** a permission data update while participating in a document-based conference or otherwise connected to the collaboration server. Such updates, upon receipt may be implemented **1216**. The updates may also be stored to the local document instance and may also modify document permissions associated with one or more actions a participant may perform even while not connected to a collaboration server. For example, an update may prevent further modifications from being made to the document or other actions from being performed, such as printing.

In some embodiments, received **1210** permission data and received **1214** permission data updates may be stored to the document **1202**. In other embodiments, permissions data may be stored in a local memory or storage device accessible to an application performing the method **1200**.

It is emphasized that the Abstract is provided to comply with 37 C.F.R. § 1.72(b) requiring an Abstract that will allow the reader to quickly ascertain the nature and gist of the technical disclosure. It is submitted with the understanding that it will not be used to interpret or limit the scope or meaning of the claims.

In the foregoing Detailed Description, various features are grouped together in a single embodiment to streamline the disclosure. This method of disclosure is not to be interpreted as reflecting an intention that the claimed embodiments of the inventive subject matter require more features than are expressly recited in each claim. Rather, as the following claims reflect, inventive subject matter lies in less than all features of a single disclosed embodiment. Thus, the following claims are hereby incorporated into the Detailed Description, with each claim standing on its own as a separate embodiment.

It will be readily understood to those skilled in the art that various other changes in the details, material, and arrangements of the parts and method stages which have been described and illustrated in order to explain the nature of the inventive subject matter may be made without departing from the principles and scope of the inventive subject matter as expressed in the subjoined claims.

What is claimed is:

1. A computerized method comprising:  
on a client computing device including a local copy of a document:

in response to an indication to open the local copy of the document, determining whether the local copy of the document includes document-based conferencing connectivity data;

when the local copy of the document is determined to include the document-based conferencing connectivity data embedded within the local copy of the document, extracting collaboration session permission data and the document-based conferencing connectivity data, the document-based conferencing connectivity data including:

- (i) a collaboration server identifier that specifies a collaboration server for connection, and
- (ii) a document identifier that identifies the local copy of the document;

in response to extracting the document-based conferencing connectivity data, connecting to a collaboration session on the collaboration server specified by the collaboration server identifier extracted from the document-based conferencing connectivity data, the collaboration session identified based on the document identifier extracted from the document based conferencing connectivity data, wherein each of a plurality of collaboration session participants are connected to the collaboration session for viewing a respective local copy of the document;

when a designation of a collaboration session permission for a further collaboration session participant is received, storing, within the local copy of the document at the client computing device, the designation of the collaboration session permission received for the further collaboration session participant, wherein a service module determines whether one or more actions can be performed by the further collaboration session participant when connected to the collaboration session as a function of the document identifier, an identity of the further collaboration session participant, and the designation;

transmitting a representation of the collaboration session permission to the further collaboration session participant; and

when a modification to an existing collaboration session permission is received for one of the plurality of collaboration session participants:

storing, within the local copy of the document at the client computing device, a designation of the modified collaboration session permission for the one of the plurality of collaboration session participants; and

transmitting a representation of the modified collaboration session permission to the one of the plurality of collaboration session participants.

2. The computerized method of claim 1, wherein the transmitting of the representation of the collaboration session permission to the further collaboration session participant includes:

transmitting the representation to the further collaboration session participant via the collaboration server.

3. The computerized method of claim 1, wherein the transmitting of the representation to the further collaboration session participant via the collaboration server includes:

calling a service on the collaboration server.

4. The computerized method of claim 1, wherein the designation of the collaboration session permission comprises a permission limiting an action ability that can be performed by the further collaboration session participant

with regard to the respective local copy of the document of the further collaboration session participant.

5. The computerized method of claim 1, wherein the local copy of the document includes at least a portion encoded according to a page description language file format specification.

6. A computerized method comprising:

accessing a local copy of a document stored on a client computing device performing the computerized method;

in response to accessing the local copy of the document stored on the client computing device, determining whether the local copy of the document includes embedded document-based conferencing connectivity data;

when the local copy of the document is determined to include the embedded document-based conferencing connectivity data, extracting, from the local copy of the document, permissions data and the document-based conferencing connectivity data, the document-based conferencing connectivity data including:

(i) a Uniform Resource identifier that specifies a collaboration server for connection to the client computing device performing the computerized method, and

(ii) a document identifier that identifies the local copy of the document as stored on the client computing device;

in response to extracting the document-based conferencing connectivity data, connecting to a collaboration session on the collaboration server specified by the Uniform Resource Identifier extracted from the document-based conferencing connectivity data, the collaboration session identified based on the document identifier extracted from the document-based conferencing connectivity data;

receiving conferencing data from the collaboration server, the conferencing data including further permissions data, the further permissions data of the conferencing data including a designation, wherein a service module determines whether one or more actions can be performed by a collaboration session participant when connected to the collaboration session as a function of the document identifier, an identity of the collaboration session participant, and the designation;

embedding the further permissions data received from the collaboration server in the local copy of the document stored on a client computing device; and

implementing the permissions data extracted from the local copy of the document and the further permissions data of the conferencing data received from the collaboration server; and

when a modification to at least one of the permissions data and the further permissions data is received:

storing, within the local copy of the document at the client computing device, a designation of the modified collaboration session permission for the collaboration session participant; and

transmitting a representation of the modified collaboration session permission to the collaboration session participant.

7. The computerized method of claim 6, wherein the further permissions data of the conferencing data prevents at least one of the one or more actions from being performed with regard to the local copy of the document.

8. The computerized method of claim 7, wherein the further permissions data of the conferencing data prevents a

user from sharing modifications to the local copy of the document with a further collaboration session participant.

9. The computerized method of claim 6, further comprising:

communicating data representative of document modifications via the collaboration server, the data further including an identifier of a document location and instructions to change the identified document location.

10. The computerized method of claim 6, wherein the receiving of the conferencing data from the collaboration server includes:

receiving the conferencing data as originated with one or more other computing devices of other collaboration session participants, wherein the conferencing data is relayed by the collaboration server.

11. The computerized method of claim 6, wherein the document includes a portion encoded according to a page description language file format specification.

12. A system comprising:

at least one memory device storing a data viewing user interface and a conferencing module

at least one processor that executes the data viewing user interface and the conferencing module; and

at least one network interface device;

wherein the conferencing module, as executed via the at least one:

determines, in response to an indication of accessing a dataset stored locally on the at least one memory device, whether the dataset includes embedded conferencing connectivity data;

upon a determination that the dataset stored locally on the at least one memory device includes the embedded conferencing connectivity data, extracts the conferencing connectivity data from the dataset stored locally on the at least one memory device, the conferencing connectivity data including:

(i) a collaboration server identifier that specifies a collaboration server for connection, and

(ii) a dataset identifier that identifies the dataset as stored locally on the at least one memory device,

a portion of the dataset being displayable in the data viewing interface;

upon extraction of the conferencing connectivity data and via the at least one network interface device, connects to a collaboration server specified by the collaboration server identifier extracted from the conferencing connectivity data;

joins a collaboration conference based on the dataset identifier extracted from connectivity data, wherein the collaboration conference is specific to the dataset and each of a plurality of collaboration conference participants views a respective local copy of the dataset; and

receives data from the collaboration server, via the network interface device, the data including permissions data for at least one of the plurality of collaboration conference participants, the permissions data including a designation, wherein a service module manages whether one or more actions can be performed by the at least one of the plurality of collaboration conference participants when connected to the collaboration conference as a function of the document identifier, an identity of the at least one of the plurality of collaboration conference participants, and the designation;

processes the permissions data including the designation, wherein the designation is implemented to

allow or deny the one or more actions when the at  
 least one of the plurality of collaboration conference  
 participants attempts to perform the one or more  
 actions upon the dataset as displayed within the data  
 viewing user interface; 5  
 stores the received permissions data within the dataset  
 that is stored locally on the at least one memory  
 device; and  
 when a modification to the permissions data for at least  
 one of the plurality of collaboration conference partici- 10  
 pants is received:  
 storing, within the dataset that is stored locally on the  
 at least one memory device, a designation of the  
 modified permissions data for the at least one of the  
 plurality of collaboration conference participants; 15  
 and  
 transmitting a representation of the modified permis-  
 sions data to the at least one of the plurality of  
 collaboration conference participants.

**13.** The system of claim **12**, wherein the dataset is a 20  
 document encoded according to a page description language  
 file format.

**14.** The system of claim **12**, wherein the one or more  
 actions includes a document editing action.

**15.** The system of claim **14**, wherein the one or more 25  
 actions includes sharing the conference participants.

**16.** The system of claim **12**, wherein the one or more  
 actions are related to an ancillary conferencing elements.

**17.** The system of claim **16**, wherein the ancillary con-  
 ferencing elements includes a shared whiteboard element. 30

\* \* \* \* \*